1460

THE FREE-HOLDER'S ADDRESS TO THE FREE-CITIZENS OF DUBLIN.

DUBLIN:

Printed by JAMES ESDALL, on *Cork-Hill*, 1749.

Aug 23

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

FREE-HOLDER'S

ADDRESS &c.

GENTLEMEN;

THE time being near at hand, when you are to chuſe a Perſon proper to Repreſent you in *Parliament*; I think I can't employ a ſpare Hour, better than in giving ſome neceſſary Cautions in an Affair which does not alway offer it ſelf to our conſideration; and therefore you'll be the readier to excuſe thatfreedomof thought and expreſſion, which ought to be judg'd indifferently to every body upon theſe occaſions.

I am my ſelf a *Free-Holder*, and for that very reaſon have a natural right to examine into the merits of the *reſpective Candidates*, for this important truſt: You all of you know (or at leaſt ought to know) that he who has the truſt committed to him, of making laws for the reſt of his *Fellow-Citizens*; ſhould be at leaſt ſo far equal to ſuch a truſt, as to admit of no objections againſt either

his capacity or integrity, whatever might be made to his fortune or circumſtances: I muſt be ſo free to tell you, were I to have my own choice, I ſhould be willinger to *elect* a perſon with the firſt of theſe qualifications, and the reaſon (as I take it) is becauſe ſuch a man will be preſumed to take every opportunity of diſtinguiſhing himſelf, when ever the *intereſt* or *honor* of his *Country* ſhall call upon him to do ſo; that is, upon the ſuppoſition he is of that ſort of men that will happen to be properly affected with the love of praiſe; ſuch a temper and diſpoſition of mind muſt be intirely owing to *nature*, and indeed as the world goes there are I am afraid, but few perſons ſo much in love with *glory* and *reputation*, as to forego any other advantages when they ſhall happen to come in competition with *them*.

From what is already offered, this neceſſary conſequence may be infered *viz.* That when ever ſuch a man is to be found, and at the ſame time in tollerable eaſy circumſtances, he is undoubtedly the *perſon we ought to chuſe*, I muſt not here omit ſome other qualifications requiſite to form the *character* of our *Repreſentative*. He ſhould then be a man well verſed in the ſtudy of the *laws* and *conſtitutions*, there ſhould be added to ſuch a knowledge, an eaſy elocution; for there are charms in eloquence eaſier to be conceived than expreſſed, and indeed this one endowment will carry a man a great way in ſuch an *aſſembly*; I muſt not omit remarking that this ſingle *talent of eloquence*, is of it ſelf ſo conſiderable a part, that all the reſt ſeem to be of no manner of uſe without

out it? For Godſake, of what ſervice in life would be a yea, or nay, *rich man*, to you who comes into the *Senate-houſe* of a morning, to ſit as a *ſpectator 'till noon*; he is juſt as ſerviceable as the people are, who come there only to hear the debates: Is it not notorious that ſuch men ſo unqualified can have any pretenſions to a place, *which nature never deſigned them for?* But forſooth they are *men of large eſtates*, (that may be) and at the ſame time may be very great *block-heads*; that's ſo clear a point as I believe no body but themſelves will diſpute it, and tho' I would not have you to make choice of *a dull rich fellow*, it will not therefore follow, that you muſt neceſſarily chuſe an *ingenious needy man*, no, I wou'd have him equal to the place, and then again above the *temptation of a bribe*.

I muſt confeſs that the degenerate age we live in, makes nothing ſhameful but *poverty*; and pray what have been the happy fruits of theſe depraved notions? Why truly, a few people more cunning and leſs honeſt than the reſt of their countrymen, have got for themſelves *great eſtates, at the expence of every tender ſentiment ariſing from humanity and good nature*, pray do the communicate to their *needy brethren!* ſo far from doing ſo, that the wretchedneſs of the *poor*, and the *luxury* of the *rich*, were never ſo near their different extreams, you may perceive a perfect indolence and inſenſibility among the later, and do but change the proſpect, you ſee nothing but diſcontent, dejection, and diſpair, among the former, who under the preſent unhappy circumſtances, ſeem reſolved

ſolved rather to quit their Country, than bear the inſupportable load of *oppreſſion and want*? I ſhou'd not have entered into this digreſſion, but that the preſent ſituation of our affairs makes it neceſſary to ſay ſomething proper to inſpire you with a laudable averſion to thoſe inſenſible *ſavages*, *ſtrangers* to benevolence, and enemies to that *antient hoſpitality*, which our fore-fathers have been ſo famed for. Now then make the application your ſelves, and let *every man* aſk himſelf or his neighbour this ſingle queſtion, *whether Ireland ever more wanted ſome great and good men to ſtand up for it's intereſt*? The anſwer is ſo obvious, there will be no occaſion to mention it, therefore I conceive is of great importance.

Is it not a *debt* that every man who is a *member of the community* and has a *ſtake* in the city, owes to himſelf, to his *fellow-citizens* and to *poſterity*, to do what in him lies for promoting the common good, and oppoſing any *intereſt* that appears to him inconſiſtent with that of the *Publick*, and will not that man act contrary both to his *duty* and his *intereſt* (and if he be a *free-man* to the *expreſs tenor of his oath*) who where there is a competition between *candidates*, gives his vote upon any *ſelfiſh views*, *or at any body's inſtigation* for that perſon whom he believes in his conſcience to be *leſs capable and likely* to ſerve the city well, than's *competitor*, and eſpecially who ſides with a party, the ſucceſs of whoſe deſigns he's convinced will be prejudicial to the *publick*, and tend to perpetuate thoſe abuſes, the removal and prevention of which every good *citizen* can't but wiſh for and

if

(if he be conſiſtent with himſelf) heartly endeavour.

If my fellow citizens will when this paper comes to their hands ſit down, and deliberately go over theſe rules one by one, and without byas or partialty towards either of the contending parties, aſk his own opinion concerning each of them, reſolving to vote and act on this occaſion agreeable to the dictates of his own judgment and not in compliance with other men's importunities or perſwaſions. I ſhall be in no pain about the iſſue of the preſent *election*, but take it for granted that every man of common ſenſe and honeſty will without any body's telling him which way to vote, take the right ſide of the queſtion, and favour the pretenſions of the *candidates* whom it is the intereſt of the city to chuſe for their *repreſentatives*.

Let me entreat you gentlemen, to deal candidly in this matter, and to behave with a *prudence* and *reſolution* worthy of *citizens:* Suffer not yourſelves to be either cajoled by the flattering pretences of *artful men* who by fair ſpeeches endeavour to impoſe upon you, or terrifyed by the threats of thoſe that are *land-lording* you into a compliance with their deſires. Be juſt to your ſelves and ſtand by your own rights and liberties, as becomes *Proteſtant free-men* and *free-holders*, that know the value of their priviledges, and think them worth contending for. Let not *paſſion prejudice or any little private intereſt* govern you on this impoptant occaſion. Believe not every idle report, nor take any thing for granted that affects the preſent queſtion till you ſee it well proved. Lyes are only the ſtrength of a cauſe that wants

reaſon

reaſon to ſupport it. Regard not the falſe and malicious inſinuation of thoſe who are for making *this election a party cauſe* betwixt the *church* and the *diſſenters*. Can any thing be more abſurd than ſuch a repreſentation or can there be a groſſer impoſition upon your underſtanding, than the attempting to perſwade you that this is the caſe, when the contrary is as viſible as *day light* to any man that has his eyes open.

I can aſſure you, I ſcorn either to detract or flatter, their perſons are alike to me, I wiſh them all well, but I would have you impartially to conſider which is the moſt proper perſon: and not to vote for favour or affection, but according to the beſt of your knowledge, for the good of your country.

This is the ſincere deſire of your friend and well-wiſher,

DUBLIN, *Auguſt* 23 *d.* 1749.

6 DE 53